

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the Office Action dated August 29, 2009 and provide the following response thereto. Applicants present this amendment in a sincere effort to place the application in consideration for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In this amendment, Claim 19 has been amended, Claim 34 has been cancelled without prejudice, and no new claims have been added. Accordingly, Claims 1-15, 17-33, and 35-38 are presented for consideration. No new matter has been added.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated on page 10 of the Office Action that Claims 1-15, 17, and 18 are allowable. The Examiner has also indicated that Claims 19-33 and 35-38 would be allowable if the features of dependent Claim 34 were incorporated into independent Claim 19. Accordingly, Applicants have amended Claim 19 to incorporate the limitations of Claim 34. Claim 34 has been cancelled.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 19-32 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as being unpatentable over Guthrie (US 5,289,372) in view of Maloney (US 2005/0156739). In view of Applicants' amendment to Claim 19, this rejection is respectfully rendered moot and Claim 19 is allowable. Because Claims 20-32 and 35 depend from, and therefore include all the limitations of Claim 19, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also allowable.

Claims 33 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over Guthrie (US 5,289,372) in view of Maloney (US 2005/0156739), as applied to Claim 19, and further in view of Kaplan et al. (US 3,689,885). As previously described, Claim 19 is allowable. Since Claims 33 and 36 depend from Claim 19, they are also allowable.

Claims 37 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over Guthrie (US 5,289,372) in view of Maloney (US 2005/0156739), as applied to Claim 19, and further in view of Walter (US 5,856,788). Claims 1 and 19 are allowable. Because Claim 37 depends from allowable Claim 1 and Claim 38 depends from allowable Claim 19, they are also allowable.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has amended independent Claim 19 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 34 in order to expedite the prosecution of this application towards allowance. Claim 34 has been cancelled without prejudice. It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the cancellation of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its cancellation.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees associated with this communication, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-2117. Such authorization includes authorization to charge fees for extensions of time, under 37 C.F.R § 1.17 and also should be treated as a constructive petition for an extension of time in this reply or any future reply pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number provided below to discuss any outstanding issues relating to the allowability of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

By:

 8/21/08

Date

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